



Literacy Links

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Monthly E-Newsletter of Maine Reading First

"Existing scientific research on reading fluency indicates that it is an important factor in reading education and thus should be part of any comprehensive and effective reading curriculum."

Timothy Rasinski, 2004



Upcoming Maine Reading First Events

June 23 and 24~
Maine Reading First
Level II Summer
Institute at the
Sunday River Resort

Spotlight on... Reading Fluency

Reading fluency is the ability to read words quickly with accuracy and expression. Fluent reading sounds effortless and has a conversational tone. There are four components of reading fluency:

- **Rate**—The speed at which the text is read.
- **Accuracy**—The ability to read words correctly.
- **Automaticity**—The ability to read words quickly.
- **Prosody**—The appropriate use of intonation, phrasing, and expression.

All four of these components are critical for reading fluency because fluent reading is not only quick and automatic reading of text. The ability of readers to recognize where to pause or place emphasis, how to chunk text into meaningful phrases, and how to attend to punctuation are key elements of reading fluency.

Reading fluency serves as a bridge between word recognition and text comprehension. When readers demonstrate fluent reading, their cognitive resources are not being expended on decoding and can therefore be devoted to comprehension of the text. When readers are consumed with decoding at the word level, they are unable to read the text fluently and little attention is left for text comprehension. Fluent readers can process text more quickly, allowing them exposure to more texts which thereby increases their reading volume and opportunities to practice fluent reading.

Reading fluency develops over time with substantial practice. The texts which are used for practicing fluency need to be at the high instructional or independent reading level for the reader. When the level of texts is too challenging, readers will focus too much attention and energy on decoding the words and therefore be unable to adequately practice fluency. It is important to recognize that fluency changes depending on the type of text that is being read. Familiarity with the topic and words within the text as well as the amount of practice reading the text are all factors which can influence how fluently the text is read.

Summary of Professional Literacy Text... The Fluent Reader

Timothy Rasinski, one of the well-known leaders in the field of reading fluency, shares research and strategies for integrating fluency into classroom instruction in his professional resource book, *The Fluent Reader*. Mr. Rasinski begins the book by sharing a research-based rationale for oral reading fluency. The majority of the book is devoted to effective and easy-to-implement strategies for helping students develop and build their oral reading fluency. He explains how read alouds can be powerful tools to model fluent reading as

June 27 and 28~
Maine Reading First
Level I Summer
Institute at the
University of Maine
at Presque Isle

June 30 and July 1~
Maine Reading First
Level I Summer
Institute at the
Samoset Resort

July 15~Maine
Reading First
Seminar for School
Leaders at the
Augusta Civic Center



*"Fluent reading is a
major goal of reading
instruction because
decoding print
accurately and
effortlessly enables
students to read for
meaning."*
Wiley Blevins, 2001

well as how repeated readings can foster student's ability to read fluently. The book concludes with a description of various ways to assess students' reading fluency. More information about *The Fluent Reader* by Timothy Rasinski can be accessed at <http://www.scholastic.com>

Description of Instructional Idea...

Repeated Readings

The purpose of repeated readings is to provide students with opportunities to practice reading short text passages over time in an effort to improve their oral reading fluency. There are several designs of repeated readings which vary the structure and level of support.

The most well-known method for repeated readings involves the following steps:

1. Select a text passage which is at the student's high instructional or independent reading level.
2. Ask the student to orally read the text passage for one minute. Mark the point in the text where the student stops reading.
3. Share feedback about the qualities of the reading fluency with the student.
4. Use a graph or chart to record the rate of the student's reading. The reading rate is calculated by counting the number of words the student reads correctly within one minute.
5. Encourage the student to practice reading the same text passage either independently or with a partner.
6. Ask the student to read the same text passage for one minute at different intervals over time after the student has practiced reading it. Record the progress in the student's reading rate on the chart.

Involvement of the student in charting the progress in reading rate increases the student's interest and motivation in becoming a fluent reader.

News from Maine Reading First...

Maine Reading First has finalized the plans for its summer seminar for school leaders. "What It Takes to Lead with the End in Mind: Promoting Reading Instruction in the Primary Grades" is a daylong workshop for school leaders that will focus on the characteristics of schools that achieve high levels of reading achievement and the role of school leadership in accomplishing this critical goal. Participants will leave the session with practical strategies for leading their schools toward improving reading achievement for K-3 students, including:

- reading targets for the primary grades,
- using data to make instructional decisions,
- using grade level team meetings to improve reading instruction, and
- providing constructive feedback to support teacher growth.

The presenters for this workshop will be Stuart Greenberg of the Eastern Regional Reading First Technical Assistance Center at the Florida Center for Reading Research and Maine Reading First consultants.

This seminar for school leaders will be held on Friday, July 15 from 9-3 p.m. at the Augusta Civic Center. The registration cost is \$50 and will include lunch and a copy of *Reading First: Instructional Leadership for Principals*.

The registration form for this seminar can be accessed at <http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/homepage.htm>

There are still openings...

for all three of the Maine Reading First summer institutes being offered at different locations across the state this summer. Register now to attend one of these institutes where you will learn lots of great ideas and strategies to implement research-based reading instruction and assessment. More information and registration forms for these events can be accessed at <http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/homepage.htm>



For additional information about any of the items in this newsletter or to sign up to receive this e-newsletter, please email janet.trembly@maine.gov

Click here to view the Maine Reading First website
<http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/homepage.htm>